Land policy REVIEW

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An Introduction

YOU are now reading the first issue of the LAND POLICY REVIEW to be published by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics. Taking the place of the former *Land Policy Circular*, this printed REVIEW will fill a long-felt need for a publication that can give adequate information on current developments in land policy and land programs to workers of the Department of Agriculture and cooperating groups.

Increasingly during recent years, land use has been stressed as a highly important aspect of the work of many bureaus within the Department. As concern with land use policies and adjustments has developed, the activities of these many agencies have come into closer proximity. Coordination of land-use programs and the pooling of information have been among the inevitable developments of this close interrelationship.

The Bureau of Agricultural Economics has been given responsibility for the execution of the land-use program authorized by Congress in Title III of the Bankhead-Jones Act, and is therefore directly concerned with the development of land policies. Moreover, as the agency which is charged with the primary assembling and distribution of agricultural-economic data, it feels that the publication of reliable information concerning the growing field of land economics is particularly appropriate.

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The men who are to plan sound land-use adjustments today must be equipped with a comprehensive knowledge that no traditional curriculum in professional schools now gives. Their background must include something of the agricultural economist, the forester, the soil conservationist, the wildlife technician, and the recreationist, to mention some of the more important phases of their work. They must keep in touch with the progress of thought and action in all these fields if their own work is to maintain its proper balance. The LAND POLICY REVIEW will help provide such information not only to workers of the Department, in all its land using branches, but to others who through State and local agencies are providing that cooperation which Secretary Wallace has referred to as being indispensable to the achievement of good land use.

Because you and others who see this publication are busy and have no time for lengthy reading in the midst of pressing duties, we have attempted to design a periodical eminently easy to digest. It is small, easy to handle, and convenient for the pocket. Its articles are reduced to the minimum length for adequate and readable presentation of their subjects. Each month, in addition to shorter articles, you will find digests of publications, reports of significant happenings, and one or two more substantial articles treating basic aspects of land policy.

The Bureau starts publication of the LAND POLICY REVIEW with confidence that it will serve a valuable purpose in broadening the contacts of those who are engaged in that imperative task of helping the American people derive the fullest use of land resources.—A. G. BLACK.

First Land-Use Project Leased to State

SECRETARY WALLACE'S action in signing a lease with the State of Connecticut on April 30 turned over to its future managing agency the New London land utilization project—first of the land utilization projects designed for State administration.

Under terms of the lease, the State of Connecticut assumes full responsibility for the management, protection, and operation of the area for 99 years. The State's commission on forests and wildlife will have immediate charge of the project and will operate it on a strict nonprofit basis. Provisions for maintenance of all recreational facilities, the conservation of wildlife, and the management of forests for sustained yield are contained in the lease.

Other transfers of land utilization projects to State agencies are expected to take place in the near future in accordance with the Bureau's policy of cooperation with the States.

Our Land Policy Today

by L. C. GRAY

THE rapid progress toward the realization of a national land policy for the United States has been one of the outstanding developments in agriculture and conservation during recent years. Our land policy today represents the confluence of many small streams, each springing from a separate source, which have in the course of their development proceeded toward an inevitable juncture and unification. They have not all as yet been joined together, but they have for the most part come in sight of each other, and it is evident to the realistic observer that a further meeting of waters is only a short distance ahead.

In working out a land policy during recent times we have progressed far from the former attitudes and policies that governed the disposition and use of land. For more than a century the United States was dominated by a pioneer attitude toward natural resources. The pioneer must destroy the wilderness in order to live, and it was in tacit acceptance of that principle that we settled the American continent and converted its natural wilderness into a civilized place of abode. But in our striving for a more stable economy and higher standards of national life our thought and action have had to move in a new direction. Where the former direction pointed to waste and destruction, the present one points to conservation and intelligent use. Where former policies led toward unrestricted individual freedom in the use or abuse of land, the present ones are shaping an intelligent plan that will protect the interests of society as a whole.

The first major change of direction in land policy was initiated by the conservation movement which attained momentum in the early years of the twentieth century. We came upon the conservation policy early because the rate of destruction of forest resources was especially rapid and the expanding areas of cut-over and burned-over stump land provided an easily understood argument in winning public backing for that first important shift in our methods of handling land resources. Parallel with this, concern was aroused by the obviously rapid depletion and wasteful use of mineral resources. In recent years eroded gullies and dust storms have aroused the Nation to a knowledge of the problem of soil waste and built up backing for another large branch of the conservation program—soil conservation.

The conservation policy grew rapidly, fed by such interests as wildlife protection and increasing public interest in the outdoors for recreational purposes. The reservation of national park lands, in fact, was carried out with the definite purpose of conserving areas of special scenic beauty.

More recently the recreational land policies have entered broader fields of positive development in answer to the growing demand for rural recreation among city people. In its private aspects recreation has become one of the leading sources of income for many States where farming and forestry formerly played a dominant role. In this sense recent recreational land use developments have a deep social significance in relation to land policies as a whole.

The conservation movement, by instituting public ownership as a means of protecting national economic resources, marked a radical departure from the laissez-faire economic policy of the nineteenth century. Earlier doctrine had led us to hand out all of the public lands to private owners on increasingly easy terms, in the firm belief that private ownership of land would automatically result in the best use of land, both from the viewpoint of the individual and of society as a whole. By the beginning of the twentieth century it had already become evident that some public ownership was essential if the resources of the Nation were to be adequately protected for future generations to use and enjoy.

The very nature of this shift in policy, however, limited the early conservation movement in its scope. Its answer to problems of land use was public ownership—public ownership in order to provide that control over the use of land which private ownership failed to give. How far this process of increasing public ownership will have to go depends upon developments yet to be seen—particularly to what extent private owners will be intelligent enough to see the long-term economy and value to them of good land use. At the present time it is clear that public purchase cannot be extended to cover all land areas which are being wasted or where human destitution is resulting from a misuse of land. The second great contribution to the stream of land policy, therefore, has been the development of methods whereby a sound use of land could be achieved on private as well as public lands.

This idea of securing conservative use of privately owned lands marks a change in our traditional concepts of land tenure. In the course of development of American economic institutions during the late eighteenth century, an allodial system of ownership in a fee-simple absolute grew up that removed all restraint upon the landowner as to the manner in which he utilized his land. Results of more than a century of exploitation and waste have emphasized that such a concept of land ownership is no longer valid if we are to protect either the welfare of the Nation as a whole, which depends upon a wise use of its land resources, or the interests of future generations. We are forced to recognize the existence of a social interest in the private ownership of land and to protect that interest where a recalcitrant individual owner fails to do so.

The need for a national policy covering lands in private ownership gave rise to an important new field of study. We had, previous to the 1920's, been concerned primarily with the physical causes and effects of

land waste—forest devastation, wildlife depletion, and soil erosion. But in attacking the problem of land use on private lands we came right up against the problem of why private landowners and land occupiers permitted the waste of their soil, forest, grasses and water, when common sense would seem to dictate conservation and wise use as the *sine qua non* of land management. Soil erosion in increasing seriousness, devastating dust storms, rivers on the rampage, and millions of farm people seeking relief due to their maladjusted relationship to the land, piled high the evidence that private ownership and wise use were far from synonymous.

The study of this problem took the form of land economics investigations in selected areas of the United States where the human maladjustments and economic problems resulting from the failure to utilize land efficiently had shown themselves most actively. The discoveries of those investigations showed that several economic forces were at work, practically necessitating a wasteful use of land on the part of private owners in direct contradiction to their ultimate welfare and profit.

It was found, for example, that many of the landowners whose soil was washing away, and whose woodlands were being cut clean, were prevented from taking any other course because their small incomes gave them no funds with which to terrace their fields or practice other forms of conservation. Their low incomes were in turn due frequently to the fact that the lands they occupied, although once considered suitable for farming, had as a result of any one of several economic influences become definitely submarginal for crop cultivation. In other cases land policies, such as the 160-acre homestead policy that was carried into the Great Plains in spite of pointed warnings of its inapplicability, had encouraged a definitely undesirable pattern of settlement which bore little relationship to the facts about how the land was capable of being utilized. On the other hand, low incomes for farmers and their consequent inability to avoid abusing the land, are in perhaps an even greater measure traceable to such economic factors as overcapitalization and indebtedness and to the maladjustments in farm buying power as a whole, in comparison with other economic groups. At this point the stream of land policy joins one of the other major rivers of our economic life—that of agricultural economy in general—and from that point on land policy is inextricably tied up with agricultural planning as a whole.

From waste, therefore, we have moved on to conservation or intelligent use of resources through public ownership, and from public ownership we have moved on to a policy of promoting good land use on private lands. First of all, this necessitates freeing private owners from the economic pressures which force them to mine their soil, cut forests clean, permit dust blowing, and otherwise tolerate waste. In this economic sphere of activity several land-use programs of vital importance have been launched during the past 3 or 4 years. Submarginal land

purchase has been used to free private owners from dependence upon unprofitable acres that can serve some beneficial public purpose other than for farming. Secondly, we have seen the start of a program to develop a greater security of tenure for farm tenants. The Taylor Act has closed to settlement the remaining public domain that is unfit for farming use, protecting families from the dilemma of attempting to earn a living on unproductive land. The agricultural conservation program is making benefit payments to farmers who will adopt soil-conserving practices that promote the national welfare. Rural rehabilitation has been launched to help with both education and credit.

Necessary as these measures are to remove the influences that prevent private operators from applying wise land-use policies, unfortunately that process is not enough. Some pressure is required to overcome inertia and to prevent small minorities from standing in the way of the achievement of a constructive program that the majority has agreed upon as necessary. For this purpose, in view of the limitations upon Federal authority, the action of the States has been encouraged to establish zoning regulations, cooperative grazing laws, soil-conservation districts, better landlord-tenant relationships, and other directional measures. State action of this nature has become an integral part of our national land policy.

To revert to our previous metaphor, we can say that by 1938 our land-policy stream had definitely entered a broad plain, drawing its water from over a large portion of the total drainage area representing our national economy. Land policy is no longer restricted to public lands; it concerns all land, whether publicly or privately owned, and concerns all people, particularly all those who through ownership or occupancy of land have a direct influence upon whether this basic natural resource is wasted or wisely used.

Moreover, land policy is no longer viewed as merely a means of keeping destructive individuals out of publicly owned areas; it aims at helping private owners and the Nation as a whole realize the greatest benefits from land resources. The role of public policy assumes thereby a more positive character in the economic use of natural resources.

Many of the present problems of land policy are primarily of an administrative nature, and with those we do not here have opportunity to deal. There are, however, certain administrative problems which closely affect our thinking.

Our present activities in land policy are centered around easily dramatized national problems—floods, dust storms, drouth, forest devastation. These problems are on the surface separate physical problems, and it is only when we dig into their economic background that we see their underlying unity and interrelationship. Out of this fact has come the need for administrative coordination, but there is no less a need for coordination in thought. In our struggle to devise ways of controlling

floods, preventing dust storms, or restoring submarginal lands to good use, we must not forget that no one problem can be treated all alone.

As a focal point for these various action programs we have developed the concept of area or regional planning, so that our thinking may revolve around the unity of a physical and economic entity rather than around any one type of land-use adjustment. In our area approach to land-use planning we take stock of all factors contributing to land waste and plan how a balanced improvement along several lines can be achieved, realizing all the while that the opportunity to act comes in terms of programs directed primarily at one segment of the problem. This balance between a national program and a local-area plan is achieved partly through administrative action, but before such action can succeed the concept must be clear in our minds.

While educating ourselves by new concepts we must not forget that public education in land use is of even greater importance in the long run. One of the greatest tasks facing us in the realization of a sound land policy, therefore, is the development of a public understanding of land problems and of the need for cooperative, direct local action. We have found that in the last analysis land use under our economic system is the sum total of private landowners and their relationship to the land.

To be more specific, for example, landowners in the Great Plains must realize that dust blowing will not be stopped until all private landowners undertake either to operate their farms in such a way as to prevent dust blowing or to cooperate in a plan for general reorganization of land use on the basis of a grazing economy which will protect the land from further destruction. No amount of Federal legislation and activity will solve the problem until the people make up their minds to go along with a program of effective action. The task of education assumes a prominent place in making our national land policy realistic.

While we are still wrestling with these economic problems, however, we should be aware that this state of mind does not give the final answer to our land problems. As we have advanced from the physical concepts to the economic concepts of land use, so must we also advance from the economic concepts of land tenure, taxation, and marginality to human concepts. All land planning must have as its objective the creation of a better human relationship to the land, and all our planning should be checked constantly against that objective, lest we find ourselves flying off on a tangent of abstract economic thought. The land economist can easily plan how a revision of land use in a given area should protect the natural cover and make possible a more stable economy. But to answer the question of how that will work out in terms of individual human families, and what the chance is of their success when the other factors operating upon a farmer's lot are considered, is more difficult.

Our land planning is not complete when we have determined the nature of the problem and placed our finger upon the economic forces

that must be changed. We must also plan for land use with full recognition of actual human needs, human capacities, and human limitations. In this respect land planning has still far to go.

Forests for Farmers

Among new programs of land use, that of combining farm and forest enterprises plays a leading part. The Land Policy Review presents in this issue a brief introduction to the general subject of farm-forestry. Subsequent articles by individuals who have given special study to the field will discuss separate features of the program in more detail.

INCREASING attention to the unexplored economic possibilities of combined forest and farm enterprises is one of the stimulating features in the current development of land policy. With the exception of grass, forests stand to contribute more to the economic and social welfare of agricultural communities throughout most of the United States than any other native crop. Yet little has been accomplished toward realizing the potential values of this resource to farmers.

In line with the modern trend of conservation movements, the farm-forestry movement in its broadest sense involves the cooperation of Government and private owners in the improvement and use of woodland resources. Moreover, recognition of the significance of farm forestry represents one of the increasingly frequent junctures of previously distinct land-use programs. Both the forester and the agriculturalist are realizing the importance of bringing together their respective abilities and interests, particularly in marginal areas where topography, climate, soil conditions, and economic factors dictate a change from a past use of land exclusively for either crops or forestry, to a wise combination of these, and perhaps other, uses.

Looking at the problem from the viewpoint of the forester, the importance of woodlands on farms is readily recognized. More than 25 percent of the commercial woodlands in the United States are located on farms, and, according to the Copeland report, are "adapted, generally

Farms and forests: a happy combination of crops, pasture and woodlands.
(*Forest Service photo*)

speaking, to keeping forest land permanently productive." Consisting primarily of separate tracts of woodland, watched over by farm families, these farm forests are readily protected against fire, often the deadliest enemy of large forest holdings. Furthermore, 95 percent of the farm woodlands are located in the eastern United States, near the greatest markets for wood products, thus making it possible to provide consumers with material at relatively low transportation costs. Increased productivity of farm woodlands should also make up for expected declines in production in some of the major forest regions.

From the farmer's angle the picture is no less impressive. Upward of 15 percent of our land in farms consists of woods, while in some States woods occupy more than half of the farmland. According to a recent publication[1] of the Department of Agriculture, forest products rank tenth in terms of income among the crops produced on farms, and in 1934 yielded farmers $62,782,000 in cash. Products of much greater value are consumed directly on the farm. When one considers the fact that approximately 900,000 farmers in the United States earn a gross income of less than $400 per year, and that a large portion of these farms are located in natural forest areas, the importance of potential income from forest products and employment is obvious.

[1] *Forest Farming. Farmers' Bulletin No. 1794, April 1938.*

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During the depression thousands of farmers in Georgia turned to the production of naval stores on their own land as a means of added income. Although previous to 1930 only a small number of farmers were producing gum, the Southern Forest Survey indicates that in 1934 farmer gum producers took in a gross income of $1,500,000 from that source alone. This item is one of many pointing to the important role that farm forestry can play in programs of agricultural rehabilitation through the profitable employment of labor not needed on the farm. Moreover, in many regions forestry provides the cheapest method of restoring and conserving the fertility of the soil.

Before the development of farm forestry can proceed along sound economic lines, however, several problems remain to be explored in the light of both physical and economic factors. Without attempting any detailed discussion, they may be mentioned as follows:

More adequate knowledge is needed of the economic patterns into which farm forestry programs can fit. In some areas privately owned farm woodlots offer adequate opportunity for farm forestry development; in others, the supplementing of private tracts with public or cooperative forest lands may be desirable. In either case the determination of the most effective type of cooperative enterprise or the sound coordination of forest operations on public and private land demand study. Is it possible, for example, to develop a pattern of combined private and public forest ownership similar to that which appears to be working out successfully in the management of range lands by cooperative grazing associations in the Western Plains?

Closely related to this problem is that of balancing forestry with other uses of land not suited to cultivation. The frequent custom of grazing livestock in farm woodlands is generally held to conflict with best forestry practices, yet the need for better pasture in many poor farm areas demands recognition. Frequently recreational resources can be developed and wildlife conservation promoted in such areas with direct economic reward.

Land tenure enters the picture as another prominent problem. Care of farm woodlots and the development of community forests demand the consistent effort of landowners and residents over periods of many years. Yet the widespread existence of an unstable farm tenure amounts to a serious hindrance to long-term improvements. The size of holdings in marginal areas also bears upon this point: in an individualistic pattern of farm forestry the acreages must frequently be larger than has been customary in order to permit a productive and valuable utilization of both farm and woodland.

Although the development of forests for farmers is still young in governmental land policy, several activities of public agencies have prepared the ground for further work; many projects offer opportunity for experimentation on related problems of land use. Educational work and such

programs as soil conservation and shelterbelt planting have helped increase the interest among landowners during recent years.

Through the cooperation of the former Resettlement Administration and the Farm Security Administration, the Forest Service has initiated some noteworthy projects. Forest communities have been established wherein families, whose major income is derived from seasonal work in National Forests, carry on subsistence farming on small tracts of good land. Two cooperative projects for farm woodlot owners are now underway in the Northeast, and interest in that type of organization is growing in other regions as well.

The land-utilization program now in the Bureau of Agricultural Economics offers opportunity for demonstration and study. Many of its projects in the natural forest regions have involved the retirement of submarginal farmland to conservational uses that include forestry, recreation, grazing, and wildlife protection. The combination of public with private land ownership in local conservation programs can be seen here, and problems of multiple use studied with particular reference to grazing and subsistence farming.—J. D.

★ For the second straight year, there was an increase in 1936 in per-acre farm real estate taxes, the Bureau of Agricultural Economics has reported, and a preliminary survey indicates a further rise is likely for 1937. . . . Land values rose faster than taxes, however, so the ratio of taxes to land values continued to drop. . . . The 156 index figure for 1936 farm real estate taxes, on a 1913 base, compares with 241 in 1929. . . . But trends in individual States were very inconsistent. . . .

★ One of every six families in Arkansas has been on the same plantation more than 10 years, reports Orville J. Rush in the Extension Service Review; 2 of 5 have not moved within 5 years or longer, and 1 of 12 has been on the same plantation more than 15 years. . . . Greatest mobility occurs, the study showed, among tenant groups contributing only labor in their agreements with landlords, and migration is concentrated in groups remaining but 1 to 2 years on a farm. . . . Wage hands shifted location most often, croppers next, renters third, and share tenants least. . . . Of the last-named group, 43 percent had been on the same plantation more than 10 years. . . .

The Use of Agricultural Credit in a Land-Use Program

by DONALD R. RUSH

HOW can the extension of agricultural credit assist effectively in forwarding a program of planned land use? That question has often been asked, and it is the purpose of this article to suggest in brief form several ways and means whereby credit can be used to promote better land use.

A categorical answer, in the opinion of the writer, cannot be given. The methods of credit extension, the policies, and the results will at all times depend on specific conditions surrounding the use of the land in the particular locality. Broad general policies can be formulated and will exert an influence, but their application must ordinarily be guided by individual circumstances if most effective results are to be achieved.

Let us consider some of the more practical means whereby credit can be used to affect land-use and farm practices.

I. *To Affect Farm Practices*

Incorporation of land-use regulations in farm mortgages offers an effective means of influence. Mortgage forms used by some agencies contain what is known as a "wastage clause." This clause supposedly protects the mortgagor against actions of the mortgagee that depreciate the value of the mortgaged property. Unfortunately, determination as to what constitutes waste is often difficult. The inclusion of specific clauses respecting land-use practices appears to offer one method of protecting the mortgagor, and would at the same time insure the more widespread adoption of land-use practices of proved value.

In their recommendations on a loaning policy in an area, one agricultural service agency has stated that restrictions should be placed in the mortgage papers requiring that[1]—

(a) Designated portions of the farm be kept in permanent pasture.
(b) Designated areas be used primarily for hay and pasture.
(c) Designated fields be put in crops only if and when properly terraced.

The report stated further that "if these restrictions are made definite and complete and supervision is provided, longer term loans than those suggested (not over 10 years, with a definite preference for loans of 5 to 7 years) can be made."

The use of proved methods of testing soil and other production factors can serve as a helpful guide to credit extension.

[1] *Texas as a Farm Loan Territory. Doane Agricultural Service, St. Louis, Mo., February 1937, p. 18.*

Credit can promote better types of farming: a dual purpose herd started with a rehabilitation loan. (*FSA photo*)

A close correlation between crop yields of wheat and the depth of soil moisture has been found in extensive tests over a number of years at the Hays, Kansas, Agricultural Experiment Station. The results of the Hays study are being used by the Rural Rehabilitation Division of the Farm Security Administration in guiding their loaning policy on wheat farms in the Southern Great Plains area, where drouth conditions have prevailed and where available ground moisture plays an important part in determining the success or failure of the crop enterprise. Provision for the use of soil moisture tests as a prerequisite to the granting of emergency crop loans would help prevent extensive seedings of wheat where the chances of a crop are slight. When moisture is deficient the land could be more beneficially used in summer fallow or planted to row crops. In addition there would be substantial savings in seed and labor costs.

An improvement of farming methods and land-use practices can be secured through tying up management service with the extension of mortgage and production credit.

The experience of the Farm Security Administration in its extension of rehabilitation loans in all sections of the country has been particularly impressive, due in a large measure to the development for each client of a detailed farm-management plan and subsequent close supervision by an expert. The rural rehabilitation loan program has been very effective in the South and Southeast in changing and modifying the farming pro-

gram. Intelligent guidance of the farming program of large groups of borrowers should have far-reaching effects on the land use of an area.

Requiring diversification and home gardens in areas subject to drouth may also prove a beneficial stipulation.

The Rural Rehabilitation Division of the Farm Security Administration and the Emergency Crop and Feed Loan Division of the Farm Credit Administration in all of their loans encourage the borrower to plant and raise a garden. Diversification of crops is specified where desirable. These requirements have been effective in raising the standard of living of many of the clients as well as insuring a type of agriculture which, by conforming to the natural characteristics of the area, decreases the likelihood of complete crop failure.

Credit might further be extended for the purchase of lime and fertilizer and to defray the cost of other soil-building practices.

Many farmers cannot afford to adopt soil-building practices recommended for their farms. Aside from being unable to carry out better land-use and soil practices on their own account, they are prevented from participating in the Agricultural Conservation program. Hence they are deprived of needed revenue which might be earned. It may be desirable to permit payments earned under the Agricultural Conservation program to be used as security for loans made to help defray the cost of designated soil-building practices. An increase in the mortgage indebtedness of an individual farm would be justified in some instances if the additional loan was to be used for soil or land practices which would result in increasing the agricultural value of the land and farm.

It might also prove wise to grant credit on livestock where some agreement among livestock-financing agencies and ranchers has been adopted to insure against overgrazing the available range.

The importance of adequate feed supplies as a factor in the success or failure of a range livestock enterprise is forcibly brought out in the results of range cattle experiments conducted by the New Mexico State College of Agriculture.[2] The land-use implications of these findings, as well as their significance to financing institutions, recommend their consideration by land-use and credit agencies operating in the range country.

Extension of livestock credit should be controlled in such a manner as to prevent or mitigate the extreme fluctuations in the cattle-production cycle. The excessive swings in the cycle have been the cause of much distress in the range country, encouraging overgrazing at some periods and the liquidation of breeding herds at others. The intelligent control of credit could be one of the major factors in bringing about the needed stabilization of the industry in both production and prices and the consequent stabilization of the use of range land.

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[2] *Benefits, Based on Nutritional Requirements, From Proper Stocking of Ranges. Neale, P. E., Press Bulletin 825, July 2, 1937, New Mexico State College of Agriculture.*

II. *To Affect the Type of Agriculture in an Area*

Differential interest rates on loans might be granted to encourage approved types of agriculture or desirable soil practices.

In areas where increased livestock production is desirable funds could be made available at low rates of interest for the purchase of breeding-cows, bulls, and necessary equipment.

Too, the basis upon which production credit loans are made can be revised.

Loans for the purpose of financing crop and livestock enterprises are made by some institutions on the basis of the past record of production—usually the record of the last 3 years. While this procedure undoubtedly has many advantages, nevertheless it tends to fix the type of agriculture in a region. In other words, a loaning policy of this type does not permit the borrower to give adequate consideration to changes in climatic, economic, and technical factors which may make rapid shifts in production desirable.

Where the problem of uneconomically small farm units is prevalent, differential interest rates might be allowed or other concessions granted, for the purchase of additional land which would secure a desirable type of farming or size of farm unit.

On the other hand, farm units which have already secured an economic combination of soil and land types should be recognized as having an increased loan value.

The encouragement of credit extension to cooperative grazing associations may constitute a constructive, long-range policy.

Cooperative grazing districts have proved a very effective instrument for securing the desirable use of range land. Credit may be used by the associations to assist them in making needed improvements, such as developing water holes, building fences, and in purchasing strategic tracts where control is necessary.

III. *To Encourage Farm Forestry Development*

There is a pressing need for adequate credit facilities for forest owners[3] in order that they may be enabled to go ahead with a program of sustained yield cutting and other long-time enterprises.

There is a further opening in this field to finance bargaining and processing cooperatives among the farm forest owners. The development of organizations of this type should assure increased returns from the forest properties and woodlots of their members through more effective utilization of the forest products. Increased returns will in turn have a tendency to encourage forest production on lands economically and physically adapted to such use.

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[3] *See A Forest Credit System. Kirkland, Burt P., American Forests, May 1934.*

A possible use of credit where the final results will be much less tangible and realized only over a long period of time is the making of loans on very liberal terms to the children of farm families for their education in technical agriculture. Emphasis on land use and soil conservation in the training courses of colleges should result in a more enlightened farming populace, which in turn will exert a stimulating effect upon our national economy.

IV. *To Control Settlement*

Marginal areas are usually deficient in capital, which means that control of vital credit sources should offer an effective means of preventing settlement.

Correlatively, credit extension can be curtailed in areas where agriculture is hazardous or the type of agriculture is uneconomic, or where there is serious exploitation of the land.

V. *To Affect the Tenure System*

Credit can be given to tenant farmers to permit them to make extensive soil-building improvements, such as liming, terracing, draining, reseeding pastures, etc. However, revision of our present leasing laws to provide for long-term leases and compensation for unexhausted improvements will have to be made to permit the widespread adoption of this suggestion.

As will be noted, this article merely lists various means whereby credit can be used to assist in a land-use program. No attempt has been made to appraise the difficulties which may attend the application of some of the suggestions. And questions such as the manner of operation of these credit methods, their costs, and the wisdom of subsidies have received no lengthy discussion. Obviously, if recommendations are to be most effective, what is needed is a thorough knowledge of the particular situation, of the maladjustments involved, and of the needed readjustments and ways of securing them.

★ The last quarter of 1937 witnessed a decline of almost one-fourth in farm foreclosures as compared with the same period of the year before, Gov. William I. Myers, of the F. C. A., reports. . . . The biggest drop was in the New Orleans Farm Credit District and amounted to 56 percent, while the only increase was in the Berkeley, Calif., district. . . . Increased security for farmers on their property was indicated in Governor Myers' report that foreclosures were reduced from 16,500 in the last 3 months of 1934 to 10,000 in those months of 1937. . . .

The Land Program at Work

An Arkansas Project Emphasizes Some Southern Needs

AS the land-use program has developed from its early emergency phases it has tended increasingly to emphasize development of local instruments for the application of sound practices in use of land and the education of local people to recognition of and responsibility for a change in long-established patterns. But even when the program succeeds, as it is doing, in focusing attention on use of land, such a consciousness is frustrated unless media for transforming this awareness into practical action are available. It is this need that has caused concern in recent years for enactment of effective State laws for soil-conservation districts, for grazing districts, for rural zoning, and now is looking toward elaboration of farm-forestry cooperatives. All of these are attempts to develop, within the framework of American traditions and governmental systems, new democratic, flexible techniques for control of land in the interest of the community.

The northwest Arkansas land-use project, 14 miles from Fayetteville, is a demonstration both of accomplishment and of need. It illustrates how use of land in the Ozark country can be channeled from destructive to constructive modes. But it is equally a demonstration of the need for a local control technique in the South that will correspond to the grazing districts of Montana or the zoning ordinances of Wisconsin.

Within its own purposes and those of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics' land-use program, the northwest Arkansas project demonstrates concrete gains. It has shifted 18,000 acres of exhausted land into productive use. In this area were the denuded flint hills characteristic of the section, stripped by intensive cultivation, and the ruined crop land characteristic of wasteful farming anywhere. These have been turned into valuable grazing areas. Extensive stands of bluestem grass have been developed, a native forage crop of high food content that has great economic possibilities. A 4,000-acre pasture thus has displaced the wasted flint hills and eroded bottoms of 3 years ago. Thereby the project has contributed to diversification and a wider use of livestock—one of the most obvious means of improving land use in the South.

The next most clearly indicated improvement in southern rural economy, reforestation of submarginal lands, and forest harvesting on the basis of sustained yield, also is being demonstrated accurately on the project. Too, the integrated nature of the entire project development

is illustrated in this phase, for the project tree nursery, irrigated by a lake impounded principally for recreation, at once supplies seedlings for the forestry work and affords a proving ground for new varieties which are potential assets heretofore foreign to the region. Some 350,000 seedlings have been set and the 14,000 acres of woodland given adequate protection against fire. The wildlife-conservation phase has been dovetailed with the forestry and recreational phases, through planting of food and cover for game and birds in conjunction with tree planting and impounding of the lake.

The recreational development, however indirectly related to fundamental economic problems of land use, has been executed with a view to serving a rural population of moderate or below-moderate means that before was without such facilities. It thus serves a social purpose of importance. As indicated, it also has its utilitarian value in its links with other phases of the project. The lake, which is the center of the recreational development, is a 100-acre blessing to people within an area of many miles previously without such a place to play. Modern cabins, bath and boat houses, and well-placed picnic areas have been built.

In this construction, as in all development phases, the relief aims of the project have been fulfilled, a considerable amount of work being furnished local people. Virtually all construction material came from the project area, and most of the workers were trained while they worked, the work relief thus having an additional value for vocational training.

Likewise, the project has been successful in its resettlement aspects, enabling nearly all the families in this submarginal area to get a fresh start on better land. There were about 160 families in the area when the project was begun. More than 130 already have moved. Out of all the families, only 22, by the time their exodus is complete, will have required financial aid in getting located again. Some of them are being given their new chance in a Farm Security Administration sponsored area in Washington and Benton Counties, sufficiently close to former homes to assure familiarity but under very different economic circumstances.

It is apparent, therefore, that the project has done what it set out to do: it has effected a beneficial change in use of 18,000 acres and, in so doing, it has given an example for other areas to follow. But, like nearly all land-use projects in the South, it also shows conclusively the need for a fully developed medium of control, functional to the region and comprehensive of that region's agriculture. It is questionable how wide an area in the South will be able to follow the example that land-use projects have set unless there is some such method of control, growing out of the life of the people and answering their needs. The demonstration projects have Federal land purchase and Federal expenditures for development as their backbone, a backbone that State and county governments find it difficult to supply. It is clear that a new type of completely local organization must be found to supplement the Federal land pro-

gram if far-reaching changes in land use are to be effected. This instrument of control must be one applicable to the southern condition, wherein diversity of economic interests dependent on the land makes futile any program founded on a single means of livelihood.

Perhaps the soil conservation district, supported where necessary by rural zoning laws and grazing districts, will answer this need. Soil-conservation districts are still in the developmental stage. Effectiveness of the State laws establishing them can be finally judged only after they have survived legal and economic challenges. It is to be hoped that they need not be confined to physical conservation of the soil, but will be of service as instruments of land management and adaptation to wise use, of institutional change, of social betterment. What is needed in the South are such vehicles for improving use of land as will provide essentially for community cooperatives, the development of a cooperative medium of control that can direct the economic and social as well as physical phases of land use; that is flexible and comprehensive enough to answer a real need in fitting the varied economic interests of southern rural sections into an orderly chart of future use; and that can be adapted to fit differing areas throughout the South. If the soil-conservation district, in conjunction with other proved instruments of control, can do this, it will provide the solution to one of the most important of all land-use problems.—R. S.

What the Tenant Farmer Thinks

ONLY about 1 in 10 tenants in the corn and cotton belts feels that his prospects of owning a farm in the next 5 years are "good," according to E. A. Schuler. The report of his exhaustive survey of farm tenants in 14 typical counties in 13 cotton and Corn Belt States is included in a bulletin released recently by the Bureau of Agricultural Economics in cooperation with the Farm Security Administration. More than 2,400 farm families "told their stories—where they were born and where they had moved, how they have fared on the agricultural ladder, what they think about Uncle Sam and his dealings with the farmer—these and many other things."

To some extent, the amount of land that would-be owners like to farm follows racial differentiation, Schuler found. "Practically three-fourths of the Negro farmers are interested in farms of less than 50 acres. Only one-fourth of the southern white farmers would be as easily satisfied, and only about one-twentieth of the northern farmers

would consider a unit of that size. About two-thirds of the northern farmers say they want the farm they buy to contain 100 acres or more. About one-third of the southern white farmers want a farm of similar size, but less than one-twentieth of the Negro farmers make the same request."

Asked "if you inherited $500 today, what would you do with it?", Negroes generally decided their primary needs were for food and clothing; northern farmers frequently declared that they would use the money to pay off debts. Almost one-third of the southern white farmers were interested in first investing in farms or homes.

While about 80 percent of the white farmers, and 86 percent of the Negroes, said they "would rather farm than do anything else for a living," only about one-third of them wanted their sons to follow the same occupation. Northern farmers were more inclined to "let them decide for themselves."

Living standards also reflected racial lines. "The proportion of painted frame houses occupied by white farm families in the South is about three times as great as that occupied by Negroes," and the average number of rooms in Corn Belt houses was 6.8, for southern whites—4.6, and for southern Negroes—3.2. Northern farms had about two rooms per person, southern whites a little over one room per person, and Negroes less than one room per person.

Sons and daughters of these farm families appear to be leaving home at a younger age than did their fathers and mothers, and marrying earlier; a noticeable tendency is found for tenants' sons to marry younger than sons of farm owners.

Among the many other questions covered by the interviewers for this report, several are pointed at farmers' moves and migrations, landlord-tenant relationships, local slants on farm problems, and group activities of a social nature. The director of the investigation, Dr. Carl C. Taylor, describes the report as "a faithful picture of what these people think of their own status, of the status of others around them, and of the prospects for improving their conditions in life."—B. B.

Contributors to this Issue

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The Dust Farmer Goes West

by NEIL LANE

WHEN citizens of the Atlantic seaboard awoke one morning in the spring of 1935 to rub Kansas dust from their eyes, they received tangible evidence of the follies of our past national land policy. However drastic this attempt to awaken the national citizenry to the menace of drouth and unwise land use may have been, it would have been even more dramatic if an influx of thousands of "dust bowlers" had followed on the heels of the "duster."

Easterners have swept the dust off their livingroom rugs and except for an occasional newspaper or magazine article have more or less forgotten about the dust storms. But many farming communities outside the confines of the Great Plains are daily feeling more acute pains because of events, past and present, in the "dust bowl."

With the advent of cropless years and subsequent dust storms, many residents of the Southern Great Plains not only wanted to leave but were forced to leave—or suffer immensely. They had heard of more fertile lands to the west, and followed Horace Greeley's advice in the hope of finding, if not a "land flowing with milk and honey" at least the chance to earn a bare living that nature had so far denied them.

Where they go and what they do after they get there has not always been considered by the land use planner who has sometimes been guilty of assuming that if the overcrowded plains could be depopulated our land use problems would be solved—an assumption which may be true from a regional point of view but is certainly not true for the Nation as an entity. Until planners face the problems caused by this mass immigration into other farming communities, they are doing only half their job; land use problems have merely migrated from one area to another.

Many of these migratory farmers have gone to the western slope counties of Colorado, especially the irrigated valleys. So many have gone that they have created very definite problems in schools, in housing, in overpopulation of land, in public health, and relief.

In order to understand why this migration has been carried on in such wholesale fashion, let us look at some of the characteristics of the western half of Colorado.

Because natural precipitation in most of western Colorado outside of the mountainous areas is very limited (usually about 10 inches), we find very little dry-land farming. Most of the farming, then, is done in the river valleys. But it should not be construed that because of a deficiency in rainfall there is a shortage of irrigation water: this lack of precipita-

tion is offset by the size and altitude of the watersheds of most of the rivers in western Colorado. The difficulty is rather that much of the land in this section of the State has a rolling topography. For this reason, only a small fraction of it can be irrigated. Land then, and not water is the limiting factor of agricultural expansion.

It is not difficult to understand why discouraged "dust bowlers" are attracted to the western slope of Colorado. They had heard about this area where water was abundant, weather mild, neighbors close, grass green, and trees plentiful. They had heard from former neighbors who had obtained farms and who were making a very satisfactory living without all the hardships encountered on the plains. They had endured drouth, dust and wind as long as their resources and patience would permit. One farmer expressed the attitude of many of the newcomers when he said, "I don't give a ——— if I never see that country again."

Undoubtedly, many of those who first arrived were able to establish themselves better than the latecomers. This is probably due not only to the fact that there was a better choice of farms but also that many of them got out of the "dust bowl" while they still had a shirt to their backs.

How many farmers have come into western Colorado during the last 5 years? Unfortunately, that question cannot be answered accurately. We know, however, that most of them have settled in the counties of Montrose, Delta, and Mesa, although some settlement is now taking place in Archuleta, La Plata, and Montezuma Counties in the southwest corner of the State.

Mesa county is probably the most seriously affected. According to the county rehabilitation supervisor, over 500 families have come in. There are less than 3,000 farms in the county in all.

This increase is reflected to a large degree in the rise in school enrollment in the various counties. In Mesa County, in the grade schools alone, there has been a jump in enrollment of 19.6 percent for the 5-year period 1931–36. More recent figures would probably show a greater increase. Contrast these figures with a decrease in the State of 5 percent for the corresponding period, and with Baca County, heart of the "dust bowl," which showed a decrease of 33.4 percent.

One school district in Mesa County demonstrates the magnitude of the problem. While the valuation of this district was dropping from $1,500,000 to $800,000 the enrollment jumped from 175 to 517.

Important as the shortage of land may be, it appears doubtful if many of the dry land farmers could make a satisfactory living in their new environment, even if given the land, not only because of the type of farming which they must follow but because many have lost all of their resources as well as their spirit. A great proportion set out with only enough money to reach their destination. One county extension agent estimates that 85 percent of those who come are in debt upon arrival.

The dust bowl emigrant steps into an uncertain future. (*FSA photo*)

An official in Mesa County reports that 250 migratory families have applied for relief and that already the county is in serious straits because of the rising demand for relief. He further made the startling statement that fully 50 percent of the newcomers will be permanent relief clients. This is substantiated by the county extension agent in Delta County. Here is a statement that hits us squarely between the eyes! In one county alone, then, we have at least 250 families whose only future is a dole. The economic and social implications of such a situation are profound.

Just what are the opportunities offered these migratory farmers? In order to answer that question, we have consulted the county agents and rural rehabilitation supervisors of the three aforementioned counties—Delta, Montrose, and Mesa. Although their answers differ slightly according to their own counties, they are essentially similar. This is what they report.

From 15 to 20 percent of the families arrive with some money. Of this number, about 5 percent have enough money to start farming if they can find a farm for crop rent. The remainder who farm for themselves—about 15 percent—need Federal aid to get started. From 10 to 15 percent become hired hands; 10 percent find nonfarm employment, and the remainder are permanent wards of society.

Let us look at those that are going into farming for themselves. What chance of success have they and what is the effect on farmers already there?

The picture is not too bright. In their desperation these immigrants are willing to accept almost anything as a farm. Those few who can buy or at least make a down payment on a farm have usually purchased small units of 10 to 20 acres, or sometimes even less. Obviously, unless they can expand their operations, they will become relief cases.

Because of the increase in the number of farmers, competition for farms has sharpened. Three important conditions affecting the stability of the area have resulted. First, many farmers are paying cash rent for their farms. In many instances, that rent has become excessive. Second, cash rent and especially excessive cash rent leads to a speculative type of farming. And third, as the demand for land has increased, more and more farms have become submarginal. By dividing their units, farm owners have taken the opportunity to sell part of their land at a good price in order to relieve an overburdening debt load. Often this division has created small uneconomic units. Furthermore, the demand for land has caused the reoccupation of farms that had been abandoned because they would not adequately support a family. Now, either through high-pressure salesmanship, ignorance, or economic necessity, the incoming farmers are settling on that land and in 9 out of 10 cases are doomed to failure. In Mesa County alone probably 100 farm families have moved into houses on land previously abandoned because it was considered too poor to farm. Abandonment of this land was in most cases due to seepage and alkali, and until it is properly drained, it will probably continue to be submarginal.

The 10 to 15 percent of the immigrants who become hired hands usually displace others who have been working for farmers at the current wage levels. Many of these arrange with their employer to live in a shed or tent. For wages they receive farm produce such as vegetables, milk, and eggs.

The standard at which these migrating families live is generally very low, settling as they do on abandoned, unproductive farms, in abandoned shacks around city limits, in tents or anything that supports a roof. Many families had become accustomed to Government aid in their former homes. All officials consulted in western Colorado expressed the same attitude toward them, saying that these "dust bowl" emigrants not

only expect but demand Government aid. Local officials have not been, and are not likely to be, friendly to such an attitude.

What is to become of these people? Some of the better ones who came with a little money will undoubtedly be successful and become permanent residents. They have been through hardships, appreciate the opportunities offered locally, and show extreme thrift in their operations. But this number is not large. The majority will or have become landless farmers, ostracized by the local people, living from hand to mouth with no hope for the future.

We don't know the answer to this spreading problem. But this much is certain: we have not solved the problems of the "dust bowl" until these people have again become productive members of society.

Here and there

MINNEAPOLIS will be host to a host of planners on June 20–22. The joint conference on planning, headquarters at the Nicollet Hotel, will be held during those days, sponsored by the American City Planning Institute, the American Planning and Civic Association, and the American Society of Planning Officials . . . Present plans call for 10 to 12 round tables, each with a committee report before it on its subject, to discuss these and other proposed topics: Rural and Agricultural Zoning, Planning a Housing Project, Urban Land Policies, State Planning, County Planning, Value of Planning to Public Officials, Integration of State and National Planning, Planning Education in the United States, Migration and Economic Opportunity . . .

★ Not only "home rule" but the knowledge and administrative resources of municipal and local officers hold the future of Pennsylvania local government, speakers emphasized at a meeting of the municipal and local finance officers of Pennsylvania, held under auspices of the Institute of Local Government of Pennsylvania State College to discuss local-State-Federal relations and township planning. . . . Evan James, secretary of Lower Merion township, explained the need of planning and how his township had solved its problems. . . .

★ Increasing intent on the part of the States to put tax-delinquent land under administration was evidenced in recent amendment of laws of seven States to bring such land, when suitable, into State forests. . . . Florida gave the State perfected title when tax certificates were outstanding for 2 years, Michigan provided 25 cents an acre reimbursement of counties in withholding land from sale, and Oregon County boards were empowered to sell or lease foreclosed land and to cooperate with Federal, State, and county Governments. . . . Pennsylvania counties have been authorized to sell such land to the State, and Tennessee has opened delinquent tax lists to the State Forester, in addition to forbidding redemption of land after dedication in a State forest. . . . Washington also has authorized county sale or donation of foreclosed land to the State, canceling taxes when the land is donated. . . .

★ Federal crop insurance moves steadily nearer realization. . . . Secretary Wallace has appointed Under Secretary of Agriculture M. L. Wilson, Assistant A. A. A. Administrator, Jesse W. Tapp, and R. M. Evans, assistant to the Secretary, as directors of the Federal Crop Insurance Corporation. Roy M. Green has been named manager. . . . Mr. Green is in charge of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics Division of Agricultural Finance. . . . Crop insurance will become effective for the first time on the 1939 wheat crop. . . .

★ The National Conference on State Parks was held for 4 days beginning May 12, with the delegates discussing such matters as State park development in the South, elements of a good State park plan, what the average man expects to find in a State park, and organized uses of State parks. They also took a trip through the Great Smoky Mountains National Park. . . .

★ Some 148,000,000 acres of privately owned forest land was spotted for purchase by State and Federal Governments in the annual report of the National Forest Reservation Commission to Congress. . . . Under past and present forest exploitation the Commission foresaw dwindling industrial structures and employment, forfeit of economic independence and security by interested communities, and failure of local governments and institutions. . . . Lands proposed for purchase include about 100,000,000 acres to be bought by the Federal Government at a cost of about $700,000,000 and lie in areas important for watershed protection, conservation of wildlife and timber, and recreational development. . . . Since passage of the Weeks and Clarke-McNary laws, in contrast with the Commission's proposal, fewer than 16,000,000 acres have been approved for Federal purchase for forests.

Books

THE PLOUGH AND THE SWORD: *Labor, Land, and Property in Fascist Italy. Carl T. Schmidt, Columbia University Press, New York.* 1938. (197 pp. $2.50.)

Mussolini's "Battle for Bread" and the gigantic reclamation and land development schemes begun under his regime in Italy have been widely and loudly publicized, and declarations by Fascist leaders that they, for the first time in Italy's history, are championing the economic cause of the peasants and giving them a voice in the Nation's political life are accepted by many. "Yet," in the words of Dr. Carl Schmidt, "it is possible that fascism in action is something very different." With this possibility in mind, Dr. Schmidt went to Italy in 1935 on a fellowship granted him by the Social Science Research Council. This study is what he brought back in his head and his notebooks.

After an examination of the forces at work in the Italian economy prior to the World War, with industrial unions rising on one hand and farm cooperatives on the other, Dr. Schmidt sketches the extreme sacrifices exacted by the war upon the peasant classes and farm workers. Nor does he find that the adjustment of the economy to a peace-time basis proved any less arduous. Extensive unemployment among agricultural laborers was intensifying the mass movement against the Old Order, for even with labor's gains in the pre-war period, the great bulk of property lay still in the hands of the aristocracy and the wealthy middle class. Pressure from below pushed up wage rates, shortened working days, forced the adoption of controls of the placement of workers. Share- and land-rents were reduced, security of tenure was increased, and the lingering vestiges of feudal obligations to the landlords were abolished through the efforts of the left-wing organizations. Landholdings of cooperatives and peasant leagues were greatly extended. Politically, the Socialist and Populist organizations made rapid progress.

But this progress was not to continue. "The leadership of the proletarian movement was divided, hesitant, and in part essentially conservative. . . . As the revolutionary wave ebbed, conservative elements in towns and country struck back at the Socialist organizations. They found a ready weapon in the Fascist Party."

The year 1921 saw the start of terrorism. The Fascists, reports Dr. Schmidt, called upon by the industrialists and big landowners to crush completely the labor organizations, attacked the cooperatives and Social-

ist-dominated communal governments. And in the end through ruthless measures, capitalism and absentee ownership became the dominant forces of the Corporate State.

Then came the "Battle for Bread" and the far-famed reclamation program. In Dr. Schmidt's analysis of it, "official truths" have received careful evaluation that the hidden semiofficial truths may be known. To state it very mildly, "The (wheat) policy of the Fascist regime has been irrational in terms of the best interests of Italian agriculture." As regards reclamation, of course, ambitious projects have been in operation in Italy for centuries. Italy's modern reclamation legislation and development began in 1882, although prior to that time substantial aid had been rendered to private schemes. Therefore, "viewed historically, the Fascist reclamation policy is but an extension of pre-war tendencies. . . . Measured in terms of financial and physical magnitude, however, the Fascist reclamation program is undeniably impressive." Extreme difficulty of appraising the practical significance of the program was encountered by the author, due primarily to the unsatisfactory sources of information, contradictory data, vague concepts, and extravagant claims. But Dr. Schmidt deserves praise for the manner in which he has handled this phase of his study. His final judgment is that "in view of the increasing expenditures for military purposes and the poverty of the country, it would seem that much of the ambitious reclamation program must eventually be abandoned."

The social implications of the reclamation program deserve notice. Increased centralization of the control of lands and destruction of the source of living for many peasants appear to have resulted. The landless farm worker, making up a very substantial segment of the rural population of Italy, has been the object of stringent regulations. His hours of work have been lengthened; his wages have declined. Progress has been made in "fixing workers to the soil" principally through encouraging the practice of paying wages in kind and the extension of the sharecropper system.

"And the only socialization has been that of business losses," Dr. Schmidt says, summing up his appraisal of the manner in which the Fascist doctrines and practices differ. Landholdings of the peasants have declined, their cooperatives have been suppressed or made ineffective, prices of foods and articles of commerce which they must purchase have been increased, adequate credit has become more difficult to secure, and taxes have been increased until now they are among the heaviest in the world. As a result, he found unbelievably low standards of living, substantial reduction in the per capita consumption of essential foods, deplorable housing and sanitary conditions throughout much of rural Italy.

Nor are the material losses the only liabilities. "The peasants and workers of Italy have always known poverty and hunger," says Dr.

Schmidt, but "the greatest danger of all for the Italian people and for people everywhere is the intellectual and moral stultification inevitable in . . . the systematic control of the mental life of the nation . . . and the barriers that it throws in the way of the construction of a more rational society."

This very readable and intensely interesting treatise should be on the required reading list of all students of agricultural policy, political science, and political history. Dr. Schmidt has made a real contribution to the understanding of Fascism.—DONALD R. RUSH.

THE WASTED LAND. *Gerald W. Johnson. University of North Carolina Press, Chapel Hill.* 1937. (110 pp. $1.50.)

When his comprehensive study, *Southern Regions of the United States,* appeared a little more than a year ago, Dr. Odum expressed the hope that the findings might be presented in a small, popularly written volume. Mr. Johnson's *Wasted Land,* in his own words, is this—a commentary on the larger work. But while many facts are taken from it, many inferences are the author's own, and it has become necessary for him to explain that "it is necessary to absolve Dr. Odum and his colleagues from opinions which they did not express and with which they are not necessarily in agreement."

Mr. Johnson is in accord with Mr. Odum's opinion that the South has an abundance of natural resources, but that it ranks below other large sections not similarly endowed because of its waste of both the land and the people—its vast area given over to a collapsing one-crop system. He believes further that the southern people can save themselves. Their problem, however, is regional, the solution is regional, and "the South must prepare for a radical overhauling of its present agricultural policy . . . an important modification of economic structure, and so of the social system." In other words, there must be a shift away from one-crop farming to diversified farming, industrialization must be continued, and educational deficiencies must be met, all with an eye on the future.

As to what specifically can be done, Mr. Johnson has some suggestions. The first step he believes is to get over the idea that miracles can be performed, and to collect all the forces in the South and get them pulling in the same direction. He says of this, "The point is, the Southeast needs some central authority from which it may obtain exact and comprehensive information supplemented by intelligent direction." The problem is not the creation of new machinery, but the creation of an organization capable of using to best advantage the existing machinery.

State planning boards are too small and national ones too big to operate with maximum efficiency, he believes, and what is needed therefore is a regional agency, perhaps similar in part to the T. V. A., to operate within a natural region regardless of State lines.—M. R. P.

√ For your attention

√ THE TRUTH ABOUT THE SHARECROPPER. *B. L. Moss. The American Mercury. XLIIII (171) 289–96. March 1938. (The American Mercury, Inc., 570 Lexington Avenue, New York City.)*

The sharecropper, characterized by many as the "forgotten man" in our present economic system, is described in a new light by Mr. Moss, who has been, he says, "a cotton-grower for more than 20 years, managing at present 33 sharecropper families."

That there is no lasting solution for the "sharecropper problem," except for the individual through his own efforts, Mr. Moss is convinced. If a man wants land badly enough to work for it, he can become a landowner. It is true, he claims, that the majority practice little self-denial toward this end, but, rather, live for the moment: the majority of sharecroppers do not want land and the responsibilities that go with ownership. Consequently, landlord Moss concludes, the Government dream of small farms operated by educated, prosperous, happy owners is a pretty one, but will not work out.

√ JOURNAL OF FARM ECONOMICS. *XX (1) February 1938 (American Farm Economics Association, 450 Ahnaip Street, Menosha, Wis.).*

In this, the PROCEEDINGS number, will be found the addresses presented at the annual meeting of the American Farm Economics Association in Atlantic City, N. J., December 28–30, 1937.

Of special interest to workers in the field of land use are the following speeches:

New Horizons in Agricultural Economics, M. L. Wilson; Objectives in National Agricultural Policy, Tolley and Hibbard; Disadvantaged Rural Classes, L. C. Gray; What Should Be Done About Farm Tenancy, H. C. Taylor; Problems of Croppers on Cotton Farms, C. O. Brannen; Land Use in the Northeast, Salter and Allen; Can Land Booms Be Avoided?, round table discussion; Goals in Land Use Policy, G. S. Wehrwein.

√ THE POPULATION OF LOUISIANA: ITS COMPOSITION AND CHANGES. *T. Lynn Smith. Louisiana State University. Bulletin 293, November 1937. (Baton Rouge, La.)*

An endeavor is made to outline the principal characteristics and major trends of the population of Louisiana, and to suggest their implications.

√ AN EXPERIMENTAL FARM RENTAL AGREEMENT. *C. Horace Hamilton. Texas Agricultural Experiment Station Progress Report 478. November 1937. (College Station, Texas.)*

In view of the increasing need and demand for better farm rental agreements and contracts, the Texas Agricultural Experiment Station studied the problem of renting farm land in the different type-of-farming areas of the State, and has in this bulletin drawn up a tentative, general farm rental agreement incorporating the best features of the contracts and unwritten agreements now in use in the State.

√ Regional Variations in the Sources and in the Tenure Distribution of Farm Mortgage Credit Outstanding January 1, 1935. *Donald C. Horton, U. S. Dept. of Agriculture, B. A. E., Washington, D. C., February 1938 (mimeographed).*

As a consequence of the extensive mortgage-debt liquidation and of the shifting of a large volume of loans to Federal credit agencies, the tenure distribution of lending-agency holdings changed significantly from 1928–35, this report of Mr. Horton's indicates. At the beginning of 1928, about 59 percent of the total farm-mortgage debt rested on owner-operated farms, whereas by 1935 more than 64 percent rested on such farms.

√ Drainage Basin Problems and Programs. *1937 Revision. National Resources Committee, Washington, D. C. February 1938. (Superintendent of Documents, 65 cents.)*

The droughts and floods of 1937 have emphasized the magnitude and urgency of various long-standing water problems and have shown that year by year water programs must be adjusted to shifting needs, the National Resources Committee asserts in its revision of the 1936 report on Drainage Basin Problems and Programs.

Forty-five basin committees of 550 members examined water and land problems in 116 drainage basins, and their appraisals have been incorporated in the committees' statements. The new volume presents compact, revised plans, programs, and recommendations for the entire country, and will be followed by the separate reports of each Basin Committee.

√ If and When It Rains—The Stockmen's View of the Range Question. *1938. American National Livestock Association, 515 Cooper Building, Denver, Colo. (57 pp.)*

This booklet makes a plea for a more practical and less theoretical consideration of problems affecting the western range. It strikes particularly at indiscriminate charges of overgrazing which, it is claimed, fail to recognize that the situation complained of is largely a temporary result of drought.

√ The Farmer and the Cost of Local Government in Missouri. *Conrad H. Hammar and G. T. Barton. Missouri College of Agriculture Bulletin 385, June 1937. (Columbia, Mo.)*

In a consideration of equity and efficiency in local government, this bulletin insists upon an approach to the problem through the fundamentals of land use. Its conclusions are based upon data gathered in 11 widely scattered counties of the State.

√ The Conservation of Montana's Irrigated Lands. *Slagsvold and H. H. Lord. Montana State College Bulletin 350. December 1937. (Bozeman, Mont.)*

Erosion from poor use of irrigation water, leaching and seepage, improper balance between soil depleting and soil conserving crops, deficiency in livestock numbers, failure to use commercial fertilizer where needed, and the encroachment of weeds upon farm land are seriously depleting both soil and fertility on many irrigated farms, this bulletin reveals.

Experiments show that a 50/50 division between soil conserving and soil depleting crops, plus a livestock enterprise and the skillful use of manure is the type of organization most likely to maintain an agronomic balance in the areas studied.

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